

Karl Barth: “[The Church] exists . . . to set up in the world a new sign which is radically dissimilar to [the world’s] own manner and which contradicts it in a way which is full of promise”.

B. What kind of gospel transforms?

- i. An *abbreviated gospel* calls people to **believe in** the forgiveness of sins.
- ii. *The gospel* calls us to submit our lives to Jesus the King, to swear allegiance to Him and await His return, AND in that King's name your sins will be forgiven.
- iii. That is the gospel of the Thessalonian's transformation!
That is the only gospel that will transform!

LIVE THE STORY

The following questions are designed for use in our Community Groups as an aid to growth in the Gospel and Community.

- In 1:3, how do *work, labor, and endurance* relate to each other? How do *work, labor, and endurance* relate to *faith, love, and hope*?
- How do you think the idea of allegiance, faithfulness, or loyalty fits in many NT verses in which faith in Jesus is mentioned?
- Read the Karl Barth quote above. What does he mean? Do you agree? Explain.
- How are followers of Jesus called to model the gospel through work, labor, and endurance? How does Matthew 24:45ff speak to this? Why are faith (allegiance), love, and hope essential for this to happen?
- When Jesus returns, will He require that we've solved the world's problems? If not, what will He require? (Matthew 24:45ff)
- If the actions of the church are to display the nature of the Kingdom of Christ to the world, what is your life communicating? What might we learn from the Thessalonian model?

Dissident Disciples (Part 3) *The Difference the Gospel Makes*

Jerry Cisar — July 1, 2018

Text: 1 Thessalonians 1:3-10

Introduction

I. The Evidence of Transformation (1:3)

“because we remember your work of faith, your labor of love, and perseverance of hope in the Lord Jesus Christ before our God and Father” (1:3 mine)

- A. What is the cause of Paul's thanksgiving?
 - i. A tendency exists to shorten this to faith, love, and hope.
 - ii. How do *work, labor, and endurance* relate to each other?
 - a) They are not different.
 - b) Each is an intensification of the previous.
 - iii. How do *work, labor, and endurance* relate to *faith, love, and hope*?
- B. What *work* does faith produce? What *labor* does love bring forth? What *endurance* does hope sustain?
 - i. Faith as *allegiance*.
 - a) The word for faith or belief can also be faithfulness, loyalty, commitment, and even an oath or pledge.

- b) Matthew Bates proposes that the word *allegiance* best captures the meaning intended in the NT.
 - Romans 10:9
- ii. The work of faith is the work produced by allegiance to King Jesus! The labor brought forth by love is the labor produced by both our love for King Jesus which can't be separated from obedience to the King's command *to love one another*. The hope which sustains our endurance in this labor is that expectant waiting for King Jesus to return.
 - a) What does “faith” or “allegiance” to the King look like?
 - Matt. 24:45-51
 - Acts 6
 - b) Labor (BDAG): activity that is burdensome.
 - c) They recognized that the gospel brings great benefits, but not without great sacrifices.

II. The Foundation of Transformation (4-5)

- A. God's election and love of the Thessalonians (4)
 - i. CSB “knowing your election, brothers loved by God.”
 - a) Who were the elect (NIV: chosen)? _____
 - b) Why were they elect?

- ii. Loved by God. (Matt. 12:18)
 - a) Jesus was chosen and loved.
 - b) Just as *chosen and loved* stand behind Jesus' healing activities that will bring justice to the nations, so too *chosen and loved* stand behind the activities of the Thessalonians that are bringing healing to the nations!
- iii. **Why does that matter to you?** Because God's love and election mean that you also have been summonsed, you've received orders, to engage in activities that bring healing to the nations and model the gospel!
 - B. Paul's experience among the Thessalonians (5)
 - i. Power, the Holy Spirit, Deep Conviction
 - a) Does deep conviction mean that Paul was loud and really pressed home his points?
 - 1 Thessalonians 2:2
 - ii. Paul and Silas modeled an allegiance, a love for the King, built on a hope in the King's rewards.

III. The Gospel of Transformation (6-10)

- A. Underneath their work, labor, and endurance is the solid ground of the Gospel which they had heard!
 - i. the message about the Lord || reports about their allegiance toward God
 - ii. The Church exists not only to preach the gospel, but to model the gospel.